

# The Principia.

First Principles in Religion, Morals, Government, and the Economy of Life

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NO. 7

## The Principia

## PROSPECTUS

## THE THEOLOGIES AND THE REFORMS.

Of all ages in the world, Reformers stand in most need of encouragement, derived from some unfailing and reliable source. The discouragements encountered by scientific explorers and discoverers, by artists, by inventors, and by constructors of useful machinery are intense, and by those who wish to seek new applications of a talent to the purposes of life, are often appalling. But they are trifling compared with the discouragements encountered by those who are laboring to promote social, moral, and political reforms. All the agents and elements of moral evil are against them. Where they look for aid and sympathy, they find opposition. The cunning and guile of enemies, and still more the timidity, the inconstancies, and the instability of friends, greatly tend to dishearten them.

"Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land?  
All fear, none aid you, and few understand."

The ignorance and stupidity of the multitude, the selfishness of the more intelligent, the heartlessness of both classes, and the unfaithfulness of even professed reformers, are enough to dampen the ardor of the most hopeful. Just here it is that the true reformer casts about him, and looks into himself and above himself for resources. When human help seems failing, or proves inadequate, then comes the question—Is there an Infinite Power, an Infinite Wisdom, an Infinite Goodness on which or on whom the friends of Truth, Righteousness and Mercy may rely, and from whom they may invoke aid? What are the Divine purposes and designs? What are the propensities, and what are the obligations of securing the Divine aid? If an understanding assurance can be had, no further reforms must be left undone; for the theology of God describes a man, the theology of the truth the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, is his final end.

It is easy to describe some of them that are *un*able. The theologian, or rather the philosophy leaver, considered is not able. \* It gives him only physical rears for moral and spiritual maladies. The reformer wars against avarice. His philosophy bids him look to avarice for the remedy. His controversy is with the inner man: this philosphy bids him change man's circumstances, and that he without supplying or suggesting the moral power needed to change them. The reformer, whatever his theories may be, finds himself breasting, in fact, the deep, broad, swift & onward current of human corruption. He may have commenced

Shall he go to that which divides the idea of human depravity, as it assures him that men are naturally pure in heart, unselfish, benevolent, and ready to do what is right when once their understandings are enlightened? Alas, to send him *there* for consolation, is to send him back to the guide that has already disappointed him. Shall he, therefore, despair? Is there no theology that reveals a power able to overcome human depravity and sin?

The theology that has no regeneration, no change of heart, no conversion, no immediate and unconditional repentance, has no ray of *hope*, as well as no *guiding light* for the radical reformer, in dark times.

And where shall he look for the elements of order, and surrounding confusion? Where, for the guiding hand of over-riding Providence, that is to shape and control the scene of circumstances in which the whole world, himself included, is floating, the waves of which are beyond human control? Where, above all, shall he find the power that can turn the counsels of the wicked into foolishness, that can take the wise in their own craftiness, that can educe victories from defeats, that can employ wicked men and devils as the instruments of their own defeat and overthrow—the deliverance of those whom they seek to conquer and destroy?

There IS a theology that is perfectly at home on such topics. The very babe of this school can readily solve such problems, which, aside from its teachings, have perplexed the wisest of men. What theology is it? Where are its doctrines to be learned? How are its lessons of encouragement to be studied? In what school are they taught?

Is it in the school that doubts or that ignores the perfect, the minute foreknowledge of God? That recoils at the idea of a Divine plan of universal providence, in the counsels of eternity, including all future events, and providing for the grand results of each and of all? Is it in the school that sees nothing but blind fatalism or arbitrary despotism in the idea of the universal control of the most intelligent and benevolent First Cause? That rejects it all as a superstition derived from a dark age? A "big error" to be discarded and is scorned?

[illegible]

Where else can they find? Where is the rock that is like *his* rock, its *enemies* themselves being juncos? Where find it in a deity who fore-sees no, all the future, who has not yet determined how he shall meet the exigencies of the future, who knows not whether inquiry or righteousness shall finally triumph, whether himself or the God who is his adversary shall, at last, be overpowered? Is this the God who

Reformers need to be assured, not only of the power, but of the purposes of the Being in whom they are to depend for the completion of their reforms. To which of theologies shall radical reformers look for such assurances that their endeavors shall ever be crowned with success?

Shall they go to those that, while denying the strength of the human depravity with which all radical reformers are called to contend, can present no revelations of a Divine purpose to overcome and subdue that depravity?

Shall they any further resort for encouragement to the theology that reveals the covenant of redemption, in which the heathen were given to the Messiah, for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession?—that theology that promises and predicts a period when "none shall need say to his brother, Know ye the Lord, for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest"—that "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth, as the waters cover the sea"—that "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ"—that "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall we learn war any more"—that they shall "sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid"—that "the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high God?"

Believing in promises and predictions like these, could radical reformers faint or be discouraged? Remembering that the prediction runs, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, until he whose right it is shall come?"—[or, "Subversion! subversion! subversion will I make it." &c.]—could they ever be ashamed of being radical reformers, or be faint-hearted in respect to the success of needed reforms?

To whom shall thorough, earnest, unceasing reformers seek for aid and guidance, but to the Lord God of Elijah, the God of Enoch, of Moses, of Nehemiah, of John the Baptist—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of Paul, of Luther, of Knox, of Hopkins, of Wesley, of Edwards? Have any of the ancient or modern philosophies, or theologies, revealed such a God equal to *that*?

## THE CHURCH OF THE PURITANS

Our members are already apprized of the *husbandry* that was raised in certain quarters, because some of the friends of Dr. CURRIER in his *Church of the Puritans* made application for pecuniary assistance, to Christian Abolitionists in England. It will also be remembered that during the clamor thus raised, the Trustees were induced to adopt resolutions reflecting on the members who had adopted that measure. Since shortly hereafter, when the excitement had in a measure subsided, a Church meeting was held at which an appeal and final statement of the reasons for making that appeal was read, some of their number, Dr. HARR, who also read resolutions which had been adopted on the subject by a meeting in Edinburgh, as follows.

EDINBURGH Oct. 17, 1859.  
At a meeting called to consider the position of the Rev  
Dr. Cheever of New York, the following resolutions were





# The Principal.

NEW YORK SATURDAY DECEMBER 21, 1856.

## THE POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT.—WHOSE IS IT?

The Post-Master-General has issued an Official Letter authorizing the local post-masters to exclude what he deems incendiary publications from the mails. A post-master in New Jersey has undertaken the task of execution in his district. This is a beginning toward carrying out a prescription proposed, but abandoned, in 1840. At that time a great stir was raised on the subject of the incendiary publications by President Jackson, in his Message, proposed the amendment of Congress of a statute prohibiting, under severe penalties, the distribution of incendiary matter through the mails. A select committee of the Senate, of which John C. Calhoun was Chairman, submitted a report, July 26, 1845, of a very remarkable character, as coming from that source. It conclusively proved and maintained that the measure recommended by the President would be a violation of the Constitution of the United States, an infringement of the liberties secured under it. It would, moreover, be made for the interests of slavery.

"Nothing is more clear," says the report, "than that the admission of the right of Congress to determine what papers are incendiary, and, as such, to prohibit their circulation through the mail, necessarily involves the right to determine what are not incendiary, and *know* their circulation. If Congress may this year decide what its incendiary publications are, they may next year decide what they are not, and thus laden their mails with real though covert abolitionism. . . . It belongs to the STATES, not to Congress, to determine what is and what is not calculated to disturb their security."

The report, therefore, proceeded to argue, that *where the several States should have determined, severally, what publications were incendiary, the Federal Government, and all the other States, were bound to conform to those determinations and act accordingly.* Congress must enact a law prohibiting the transmission of such publications through the mails, and every other State is bound to pass laws in conformity. Thus Congress and all the States were to be controlled by the legislation of *one State!*

The report was accompanied by a bill in accordance with its recommendations.

It contained the following:—

"Be it enacted, &c., That it shall not be lawful for any deputy post-master in any State, Territory or District of the United States, knowingly to deliver to any person, whether an individual, newspaper, hand-bill, or other printed paper, or pictorial representation, touching the subject of slavery, when, by the laws of the said State, Territory or District, their circulation is prohibited; and any deputy post-master who shall be guilty thereof shall be forthwith removed from office."

Such were the views and such were the recommendations of the report of Mr. Calhoun. On the question of a third reading in the Senate, the Vice-President, Mr. Van Buren, came forward and voted for the reading, the vote in the Senate having been three—eighteen to eighteen. The bill was, however, defeated on the final vote, and there the matter has rested ever since. *Up to this hour Congress has never possessed to authorize the deputy post-masters in the several States, Territories, and Districts, to refuse the delivery of "incendiary" or abolition papers, pamphlets, hand-bills, or other printed paper, &c.* The suppression of them, whenever it has taken place, in any State or Territory, has been without sanction of Congress. The explicit action of Congress on the subject was a deliberate refusal to sanction anything of the kind. And this was not all that Congress did in the premises.

This session of 1856 was not closed without the passage of an act of a *disparagingly* specific character. "The credit of the post-office department was found to have received a shock by the discovery that had given rise to these proposals, that instead of an *incendiary* such a *disparaging* action as the President had recommended," (and as Mr. Calhoun's bill had, in another form, contemplated, "the nation was astonished with an enactment, approved by the Presidential signature, having and passed without

debate prohibiting such a discrimination, under severe and degrading penalties."\*

That act is still in the national statute book unrevoked. And yet, in this year of grace 1856, Mr. Post-Master-General Howell, in the face of the issues directed to the deputy post-masters, authorizing them to do what Congress should authorize, in 1840, say what Congress, that same year, forbade them to do, the post-masters still remain unimpeded.

This does the Executive Department of the Administration, in the Office of the Post-Master-General, and its various branches, through Congress, bludgeoned and framed for the express purpose of forbidding what the Post-Master-General has now undertaken to do.

The question arises here, with authority is paramount in this case—that of Congress, or of the Department created by Congress, and acting under its orders?

Shall two hundred thousand slaveholders and fifty an act of Congress, and usurp the control of the post-office in its essence—the institution of slavery? Or, shall our free institutions "be relinquished?"

—\*The Post-Master-General, Henry . . .

## CHURCH ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

At a meeting in West-Block, Conn., December 7th, under an address by Rev. Henry T. Cheever, in behalf of the Church Anti-Slavery Society, the following resolutions were adopted, viz:

*Resolved*, That, as Christian abolitionists, we denounce and oppose all resort to force for the overthrow of slavery; and we yet hope for its peaceful extinction, by such a universal conviction of the sinfulness and danger of slavery, prevailing the North, as shall cause Christian churches so to refuse fellowship with slaveholders, and to prefer assistance to fugitive slaves, that the latter shall be as safe in every free State as in Canada.

*Resolved*, That our reliance for effecting this conviction, and working this change in public opinion, must be upon the pen and prayer, rather than powder; and that we are to prevail by ideas, not by the sword.

## News of the Day.

From The Boston Traveller, Dec. 21.

### THE PIRATE YACHT WANDERER.

HER ARRIVAL AT BOSTON.

The history of this famous or infamous vessel has already occupied a large share of public attention, on account of her successful slaving voyage, and the acquittal of all concerned in it. She is again before the public, and is again in the clutches of the law—this time, we hope, without a chance of escape.

This morning she arrived here, in charge of Mr. Henry Weston, from the vicinity of the Western Islands. Her story, though long in its details, may be briefly summed up. On the 20th of October, she left the vicinity of Savannah without a Custom-House clearance, under the command of Capt. Lincoln Patton, of Bath, who forced part of the men on board to go to sea. She went to Flores, obtained some supplies of water and provisions, but requiring more, went to sea and spoke a French bark the master of which promised the desired supplies.

Patton, with a boat and four men went on board of her; and then Mr. Henry Weston, with the consent of the crew, took command, left the captain on board the bark, and shipped the Wanderer's course for the United States. She is now in the charge of the U. S. s. Albatross with aides, but will be delivered to the District-Attorney. This is the story in brief; we will now present some of its details, which are quite interesting.

On the 20th of October, between 9 and 10 o'clock, Lincoln Patton, under the assumed name of David Martin, put 15 men on board the yacht Wanderer, then lying in the river below Savannah, as assist in taking on board provisions and water. A little later he came on board himself, accompanied by Edward Talbot, pilot, and Capt. J. Black shipping agent. He called all hands to get under way and drawing a revolver swore he would shoot at anyone who refused to work, or who might interrupt his movements. He also threatened the shipping agent and pilot with death if they attempted to leave the vessel. Some of the crew, who

knew his plans, loaded the two guns with grape, and aimed themselves to enforce his orders against those who had been induced by false pretenses to consent to board.

Though there was a pilot on board, he directed the movements of the vessel himself, and got her twice ashore. At last she reached Tybee Light and anchored there, where the pilot and shipping master left her. Again she went aground, and remained fast four hours. At 5 o'clock, in the morning of the 21st, she floated again, made sail, shipped 31 fathoms of chain, and went to sea, carrying on her stern half the crew against their wishes.

The captain, to allay their fears, informed them that she was bound to Matanzas and Nassau, N. P., and took a S. V. and, after a few days' sojourn, he declared that he was on his way home. The pilot, having refused to clear the vessel, she sailed to sea, and thence to the Coast of Africa, where she was captured by the U. S. s. Albatross.

When she was captured, she was found to be a bark of 100 tons, and was carrying a crew of 200 men, being that he was one of the largest of her kind. She was well equipped with the trade, having introduced a large amount of the bark's Niggers, Green Tents, and other articles, and other vessels. He further informed them that on his arrival at Savannah he had failed to procure a pharmacist, and was on his way to do so, and consequently would have to go to sea, and would be dead and returning.

On the 23rd of October, however, he fell in with the ship Trop, of Boston, and fought from her the light bark, Blunt's Coast Pilot, and a Chark of the Gulf of Florida, for which he paid simply \$75. He next chased the bark Clara Bore, but when he failed her, finding the captain to be an old acquaintance, he did not go on board.

The next day he was encountered and again sailed in chase, carrying such a crew of slaves that he carried away a square sail and a split the sail, but failed to overtake her. On the 25th of October he chased a light bark, and first gave her a shot, but she would not leave, so he fired a second time, and 11 p. m., when the brig favored by the darkness of the night, by suddenly changing her course ran out of sight.

The Wanderer was now headed for Funchal, and was favored with a strong gale from W. N. W., going sometimes twenty knots an hour, and requiring two men at the helm to steer her. On the 31st, the gale moderated to five knots, which continued until Nov. 9, when the encounter of another north-west gale, which brought her to the Isle of Flores.

She stood off and on firing guns for a pilot, and when off the settlement of Santa Cruz, the British Consul, the Chief Magistrate of the place, and a pilot came on board. She then anchored in twenty-five fathoms water. The Captain produced a false clearance of the vessel, under the name of the "William, of Savannah, bound to Smyrna," stating at the same time that he had lost sails, provisions, guns, galley, and chronometer, and was in want of all these.

Indorsed by the British Consul and the authorities ashore, he procured 38 casks, containing 4,000 gallons, of water firewood, liquor, flour, rope, 200 bushels of potatoes, an anchor, and 120 fathoms of chain.

He was provisioned twenty tons more flour, but some of his movements exciting suspicion, he came on board in great haste, and made everything ready for getting underweigh that night. He smuggled two Portuguese women on board, and this circumstance came to the knowledge of the authorities. He had not a moment to spare, so he shipped sixty fathoms of chain, left one of his men ashore, and did not pay one dollar for the supplies received, valued at about fifteen hundred dollars. He openly advised the crew that he could procure eighty negroes for the women he had kidnapped.

The vessel was next headed for Madeira, called at Village Point de Salee, but unable to obtain supplies, proceeded to Funchal, where, receiving information that an English steamer of war was in the harbor, he stood to sea, proposing to pass between Cape St. Ana and the Canaries.

Still short of provisions, he declared to the crew that he would obtain them by force from the first vessel he met, swearing that he would shoot the first man who hesitated to fight for such an object.

Shortly afterward he spoke the bark Clara, of Bordeaux, but her commander positively refused either to heave to or furnish him with supplies. Two other barks were chased







